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1914a

Collected Verses.

By W. H. Miller.



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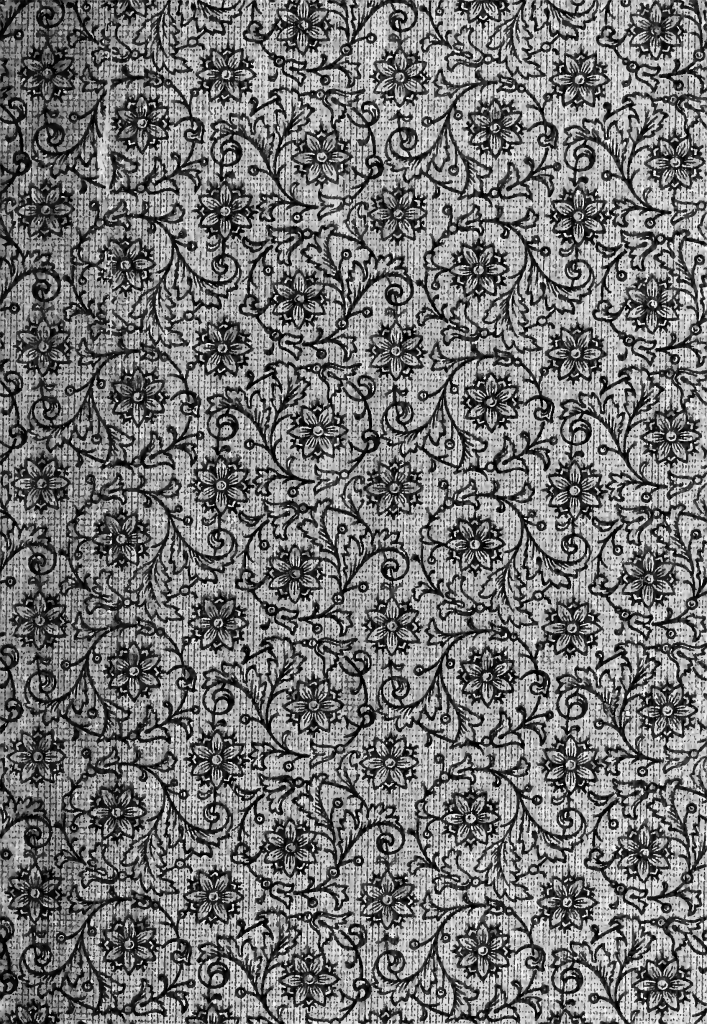
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VERSES

(OLD AND NEW)

BY

W. H. MILLS



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San Bernardino, California

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1914

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TO
MY WIFE

Corrigenda.

Page 3, line 12. For dissapp'inter read disap-
p'inter.

Page 27, line 2. For Here read Hear.

“ 27, “ 9. Insert dash before that's.

“ 30, “ 2. For Princes read Princess.

“ 38, “ 13. For She is read She's.



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An Elegy.

O California, land of gold
And sunshine---so they name you---
I wouldn't wish to be so bold,
Or captious, as to blame you.

But just a little crow I've got
To pluck with you at present
Touching your temper, which has not
Been altogether pleasant.

Some months ago we came this way
To find a genial winter;
You've been, I feel constrained to say,
A bit of a dissapp'inter.

We wanted to escape the strain
Of life as lived in Britain,
Where one is well-nigh drowned by rain,
Mostly, or else frost-bitten.

Your rainfall's right; indeed, perhaps,
Some would prefer it bigger;
But what of your snaps, and worse than snaps
Of almost Arctic rigour?

Your temperature has often aimed
At zero, and nearly hit it
Once and again. Is that what's claimed
For you? And shouldn't you quit it?

Think of the fruits that count you "home;"
Think of your reputation;
Think of the invalids, who come
Here for recuperation.

How can you possibly expect
Fine oranges and lemons,
When, as you well might recollect,
Frosts are to them as demons?

How can you help folk, whose disease
Is lung-tuberculosis,
When what you do is to make them sneeze,
And cough, and blow their noses?

Well, you've been victim, one may bet,
Of circumstance untoward;
It isn't that you were in a pet,
Or just perversely froward.

Shake yourself free from Jack Frost's grip,
And pull yourself together;
Have done with frosts, and winds that nip,
And give us warmer weather.

Be, what you've been for many a year,
The envy of all earth's nations;
So shall you have our most sincere
Thanks and congratulations.

January 11, 1913.

Moonlighters in Mexico.

Out of our camp one evening went,
In Uncle's waggon, hunters four;
It was their firm and fixed intent
To shoot by moonlight ducks galore.

So to the ranch they came, and set
Themselves, with helpers from the farm,
To manage that the ducks should get
It hot from them, or, leastwise, warm.

They figured to ambuscade each end,
And side, in companies, of the land
Where the ducks fed, and so to send
Them, as it were, from hand to hand.

That was their plan of campaign, and, as
They'd settled to do, they did; and oh!
To see them a' buccaneering was
A sight, as Uncle remarked, "By Joe."

It was crawling along the outer dykes---
Uncle refused to report the words;
It was shooting in volleys; then further hikes;
It was scampering after wounded birds.

Four hours or so they tramped and shot;
Retrieved their cripples, picked up their slain;
Then waited until another lot
Of birds came up; then shot again.

Whatever they didn't, or did, was right,
So long as they shot in time; the duck
Just simply flew at the guns that night.
Bag---six score birds; how's that for luck?

I regret to state that the very same
Strategy didn't succeed next night,
For the birds refused to play the game
As they played it first; they had grown too
bright.

ENVOI.

There's that in the game, which seems to jar
With one's sense of sport, when the thing's
been done;

But the ducks are a pest, as locusts are,
And what's to check it but man and gun?

What jars is not, I guess, the fact
That so many birds are bagged---that goes;
It's the thought of the wounded---the after act---
The feast of the coyotes and crows.



Mezcal.

They sell Mezcal with bitters
In Mexicali salons;
It's not a drink for critters,
Who take their grog by gallons.

At least it would betray them
Into offence past measure;
And then would promptly lay them
Flat, to repent at leisure.

But take a bigggish thimble-
ful of it, or, say, a couple,
And it helps to make you nimble
And slick and spry and supple.

For it seems to chase all achin',
And stiffness, from your body,
Especially if taken
With hot water, as a toddy.

It's an excellent digestive
For a bonvivant who gobbles;
It's an excellent corrective
Of chronic collywobbles.

It purges melancholy
By acting on the liver;
It warms and makes you jolly,
When with a chill you shiver.

There are those who call it "Tiger's
Milk;" that's an appellation
Which should bring into court those niggers
For character-defamation.

For the Century-Plant's its mother---
Queen of all daffodillies;
Or, if you take another
Name, She's an Amaryllis.

And the thought of Amaryllis,
As he quaffs this subtle nectar,
Should make a man, who ill is,
Spry as a rate-collector.

For it makes him feel all over
As he was when he went a'courting;
And he's ready to play the lover,
Or settle a rival's snorting.

So go to Mexicali,
And try Mezcal with bitters
Homoeopathically,
And you'll find yourselves new critters.



An Idyll.

A lissom lass, and fair to view,
She was; her eyes were bright as dew;
Her hair hung waist-deep in a queue,
As she went walking in the Zoo.

'Twas in that way then, I may state,
Girls wore their hair; I think the date
Was---tho' my memory fails of late---
1868.

What was her age? Just seventeen---
The age called sweet---and was never seen
A sweeter lass than this, I ween,
Upon this earth by mortal e'en.

Glum at her side young Colin stalked,
Mourning ambitions mocked and baulked;
But oh! she stepped, and oh! she talked,
As in the Zoo that day she walked.

She talked of this, and talked of that;
She asked him if he liked her hat;
She said, as on a seat they sat,
They now could have a cosy chat.

She wondered how he'd got the hump;
She asked him why he was a grump;
And---was there on her chin a bump?
Phyllis had given it quite a thump.

All Colin's griefs fled far away,
As on she chattered like a jay;
He asked her hand, nor said she nay,
All in the Zoo that summer day.

For, as to scan that bump he leant,
He found her eyes on his were bent;
And oh! thro' him a thrill they sent,
That changed his woe to deep content.

Each gave to each a lock of hair;
They kissed---each kiss was fair and square;
Then they got wedded, happy pair!
And in the Zoo still took the air.

O Amaryllis, fair and plump,
You knew your chin possessed no bump;
I only hope you got no chump
In Colin, but a winning trump.

ENVOI.

This is the moral, I surmise,
Of this short history; lads, be wise,
And seek that in a lassie's eyes
From which all fancied trouble flies.

Colin imagined himself, young fool,
The sport of fate's tyrannic rule;
But Amaryllis plumbed his dule,
And lessoned him in her own school.

He looked as if he wished to cry;
He spoke as if he wished to die;
And that, of course, was all "my eye,"
Because there was no reason why.

To brisk him up was her first thought;
Then for his sympathy she sought;
Then, with those eyes of hers, she taught
Him wisdom; thus the trick was wrought.



A Tragedy.

Upon the sofa, side by side,
We sat;
My heart, I own it, all the time
Went pit-a-pat.

Gently about her waist my arm
I stole;
I said, "You won't reveal this fact
To any soul."

Then murmuring "Kiss and never tell,"
We kissed;
Whizz came a slipper at our heads;
Thank heaven! it missed.

I had not noticed in his chair
Her sire;
He rose, and came at us, his face
Bright-red with ire.

As to what happened next, my mind's
A blank,
Except that, thinking caution best,
I took rear rank.

I don't know what it was that made
Me fall;
I've no idea what sped my flight
Adown the hall.

I cannot tell, not even now,
A bit,
Why it has ever since been pain
To me to sit.

One thing alone I know, and that
Is this---
I never from that maiden got
Another kiss.

Hints to Hired Girls.

We live and learn. I learnt one day
A most convenient phrase,
Which deprecates and checks, to say
The least, terms of dispraise.
If you have shattered aught and fear
Blame, as a clumsy lout,
To make your innocence quite clear
Just say---"I've worn it out."

It happened thus. I'd given our maid
An excellent fly-swatter;
"Flies make it hot for us," I said;
"Make it for them still hotter."
She eyed a bug, and aimed a stroke
With murderous intent;
She missed the beast, but promptly broke
In twain the implement.

She said, when she returned the bits,
 "I've hit with this, without
Boasting, at least a thousand hits;
 And, see, I've worn it out."
She'd really only used it once;
 Had tried one single try;
She'd broken it just because the dunce
 Had struck her stroke awry.

So, if you've been unfortunate,
 And broken something nice---
A china bowl or mug or plate---
 A thing beyond all price---
Don't say---"It busted of itself;"
 Don't say---"The cat, no doubt,
Was trying to walk along the shelf;"
 But say---"I've worn it out."

Or say you've dropped a match aflame
 On the best table-cloth,
And see no chance of laying the blame
 On earwig or on moth;
Scrub it with scrubbing brushes, till
 It's like a ragged clout;
Then let folks bluster as they will,
 And say---"I've worn it out."

Lastly, when all the furniture
Is smashed; when the whole place
Is wrecked and ruined; then be sure
That you still save your face.
Don't worry; make no fuss of it;
Don't storm and rave and shout;
Just say---"Well, Mem, I'm going to quit;
You've worn my patience out."



On Mount Soracte.

Written for a Druidical function.

O Tau-Bel-Hesus, as before
 This karn, your local shrine,
We stand, as Druids wont of yore,
 We make our mystic sign.

We offer too of mistletoe
 A spray, by way of sample;
We want the rest ourselves, and so
 We hope you'll think this ample.

And on your altar, see, we light
 An emblematic fire,
Not simply as a pretty sight---
 A thing for to admire.

Nor does it flame, as once it would
Have flamed, to make a pyre;
Its object is to speak of good
Purpose, and high desire.

We burn no human victims now,
Nor eat them when they're torrid;
Our laws such customs disallow---
In fact we think them horrid.

The fires we kindle symbolize
Truth, purity, devotion;
And Tau-Bel-Hesus, if you're wise,
You will accept this notion.



To the Fairest.

Written on the occasion of a fancy-dress ball, at which a prize, to be awarded by the votes of the assembly, was offered for the most effective costume.

Fisher-maid and flower-girl---
Each in her own way a pearl:
Sparkling witch and nun demure---
Sights that sore eyes well might cure:
Paris, your old trouble yet
Rises up our hearts to fret;
How can one of these be best?
Which is better than the rest?

Chiropody.

A chiropodist, in the strictly literal sense of the word,
is a person who causes feet to be chapped or cracked.

I met a chiropodist,
And said to him---"What's your game?"
He winked, and answered---"Whist!"
My job is to make folk lame.

'I tickle their feet, you see,
Till they use strong words, and kick;
And they mostly kick---not me,
But---my chair, for I'm pretty slick.

"Then I charge each gent ten plunks
For breaking my furniture;
He pays it, and off he bunks
To hunt up another cure."

"And what of their bunions?" "O,
They must get a C. M.'s advice;
My job is to make them so
Lame that they can't kick twice.

"For I must live up, you bet,
To my title's connotations;
But I'm not perticklar set
On counter-demonstrations."



Stript Down.

They christened him John, Constantine,
Gustavus, Arthur, Valentine,
Cadwallader, Sebastian,
Guy, Clarence, Maximilian.

Her Christian names were Eleanor,
Augusta, Cicely, Honor,
Eunice, Laura, Geraldine,
Penelope, Evangeline.

Now John, et cetera, day by day
Woood Eleanor, et cetera;
What did they call each other? Well
She called him "Jack:" he called her "Nell."

So they got wed, and children came
To keep alive their race and name.
What fore-names did these kiddies get?
O, Jack and Nell and Tom and Bet.

Mañana.

A mystic word there is that I
Here whensoever I would try
To rouse slack souls to energy---
Manyana.

It means just laziness, I fear;
At all events I never hear
It, when I offer them a clear
Habana.

Do-nothingness that's what it is:
A craving for the sluggard's bliss---
The sluggard's, for it comes to this,
Nirvana.

You need, I guess, you lazy crocks,
Some of Dame Fortune's nasty knocks,
Or shocks like those set forth in Box-
iana.

Next time you're after your Nirvana,
I'll lesson you in Boxiana,
And promise you a clear Habana
Manyana.



What He Said.

Tell me, tell me fair Eileen,
Will you, will you be my Queen?

Don't say---"O this is so sudden;"
Long my love has been a'buddin'.

Don't say---"Talk of something else;"
This all other talk excels.

Don't say---"Have you quantum suff?"
Trust me, we shall have enough.

Don't say---"You must ask my mother;"
That would mean a lot of bother.

Don't say---"You must ask my father;"
That would mean---well, I'd much rather
That you would yourself, Eileen,
Tell me that you'll be my Queen.

Gardes Joyeuses.

We built joy-castles on the sand,
As Prince and Princes of our land,
 And warders of her shores;
We'd hardly come to our full growth
In those far days; in fact we both
 Wore frocks and pinafores.

I'm building castles still, but they
Are in the air as yet, and may
 Remain a dream-creation;
She, only she, can bid them take
Shape, for I build them for her sake,
 And for her approbation.

Will she? I'm waiting yet awhile
Until I've amassed a sufficient pile
 For a castle in miniature;
And then I'll be off to my lass, I guess,
And ask her to rule it as its Princess
 So long as our lives endure.



Kinship.

Stand by your own; stand by
Your kith and kin;
Stand by the family,
Thro' thick and thin;
Stand up for its good name;
It's your name too;
Never let taint of shame
Hurt it thro' you.

If fortune seems to frown,
And things go ill
With them, stand by your own;
Hold to them still.
Keep kinship's claim in mind,
Remembering
This---that "akin" and "kind"
Mean the same thing.

You may not turn your face
From any soul
That needs and asks your grace---
Your pity's dole.
To flout such were a sin,
But the blood-call---
The cry of kith and kin---
Ranks first of all.

Traitors, who love a lie,
For profit's sake
Break other ties; this tie
They cannot break.
Nothing, All Nature saith,
Snaps the blood-bond;
It holds thro' life to death,
Aye, and beyond.

El Camino Real.

As erst Saint Paul went forth to claim
The kingdoms of the world for Christ,
So Fra Junipero Serra came
To be this land's evangelist.

Never was truer Saint of all
The souls who that high name have won;
His was the courage of Saint Paul;
His was the spirit of Saint John.

He opened out the "King's Highway,"
The aim of his imaginings
Being that it should be for aye
A Highway of the King of kings:

No common road, tho' all might fare
 Along it, but a road whereby
The messengers of peace might bear
 Their message and their ministry.

From South to North the stations rose,
 Which marked the track of that highway;
Each held aloft the Cross which shows
 God's truth, God's love, God's conquering
 sway.

And Indians, won from their fierce creeds,
 Learnt to obey the law of Christ;
Its Gospel satisfied their needs;
 They tested it, and it sufficed.

So "El Camino Real" came
 To be a royal road indeed;
It realized Junipero's aim,
 And is of his eternal meed.

For, consecrate by him, it was
A very "Way of Holiness"---
A way by which freed souls might pass
Zionward thro' earth's wilderness.



Achievement.

A SETTLER'S SONG.

She's coming to me
Across the sea---
The lass that I left in the old countree;
She's coming to bear
My name, and share
My life, my every joy and care.

For her dear sake
I came to make
A home in this waste of brush and brake;
And my task, I trow,
Is accomplished now,
For my land's all watered and under plough.

The crops of a year
Have set me clear
To build a house that will please my dear;
And, now that she
Can come by sea
Right thro', she's coming, my lass, to me.

O bless the man
Out of whose brain-pan
Came the thought of wells Artesian,
And the scientific
Souls, whose magnific
Work linked the Atlantic and Pacific.

She is coming to me
Across the sea---
The lass that I left in the old countree;
She's coming to bear
My name, and share
My life, my every joy and care.

California.

*Sung at the National Orange Show, San Bernardino,
1914.*

Of all the countries, which romance
Has pictured as earth's hope and pride,
These three, I think---Spain, England, France---
Stand in the front rank, side by side.
England the merry, France the fair,
Spain, the adventurous knightly land---
These fill the picture; yes, but where
Does sunny California stand?

Refrain.

O land of fruits and flowers:
O land, which nature dowers
With all her wealth of loveliness, with all her
braveries:
We sound abroad thy praise
With music and with lays,
Which show thee, what thou surely art, an earth-
ly paradise.

They knew her not---the minstrel-men,
 Who, in the mid-age of our earth,
Chaunted their rhapsodies; for then
 She had not come to her full birth.
But as for mirth---what gramarye
 Her sunshine gladness could enhance?
Is she not fair as fair can be?
 Is she not home of true romance?
Refrain.

This is the land men wont to call
 Atlantis---an ideal Isle,
Whereon the sun at evenfall
 Smiled, as he set, his farewell smile---
The land which, in a later day,
 Padre Junipero Serra trod,
What time he built "The King's Highway,"
 And consecrated it to God.
Refrain.

England is merry now no more;
 Her heart is rent by jealousies;
France is no longer, as of yore,
 Fairest of all earth's emperies.
And as for Spain---what now remains
 Of her martial fame, of her old renown?
But California still retains
Her pride of place as nature's crown.
Refrain.

Aurea Poma.

In days of old, so ran the tale,
 Far out at sea, toward the West,
Lay isles, untouched by frost or gale,
 Fair as the Islands of the Blest.
Upon these isles grew apple trees,
 Whose fruit was golden to the eye,
Safeguarded by the Hesperides,
 And a grim dragon, couched anigh.

Refrain.

O golden apples of the past,
What were ye but a dim forecast
 Of golden oranges?
What were those isles but prophecies
Of California's sunny skies,
 And sunlit groves and leas?

Whatever crops those islands bare
On Californian soil are grown;
Her citrus-fruits will stand compare
With that famed fruit, and hold their own.
And California bears them, not
To please one jealous owner's sight,
But for the world to use, and what
She seeks is the whole world's delight.

Refrain.

No cruel dragon has its lair
Among her groves, to scare or slay;
Not even rattlesnakes lurk where
Her orange-trees make their display.
Her nymphs, like the Hesperides,
Are daughters of the golden West,
But what they guard is not her trees,
But hearts of those they love the best.

Refrain.

El Mejicano.

The Mexican, if I'm not wrong,
Is just a rum 'un;
I know no rummier soul among
Men born of woman.

As parodist he is, past doubt,
Of all men aptest;
He calls a pot-house the "hang-out
Of John the Baptist."

Or, seeing in it a milder grace,
The name he'll vary,
And christen it the "resting place
Of holy Mary."

All sacred names find place in his
Vocabulary;
Of using them for emphasis
He's nowise chary.

Yes, but this habit is, it seems,
Just superstition;
That using them thus he blasphemes
He's no suspicion.

One thing above all others suits
His constitution,
And that is, whether he fights or loots,
A revolution.

Pulque, maybe, prompts some of his
Extravagances,
For, taken in bulk, it stirs, ywis,
Eccentric fancies.

He's half an Aztec still at heart---
That's the real bother;
And which half is the stronger part---
Well, ask another.

Wherefore I say, nor think I'm wrong,
That he's a rum 'un;
I know no rummier soul among
Men born of woman.

A Fair Land.

This is the fabled region where
The Hyperboreans lived out West---
An Eden, ever bright and fair,
Which great Apollo ruled and blest.
It is the garden, named of old
"The garden of the Hesperides,"
Whose golden Avalon foretold
Our groves of golden oranges.

What shall we call her? Arcady?
The Country of the Golden Gate?
The Land, above all lands that be,
Of Heart's Desire? The Golden State?
No matter. Titles such as these
All shadow forth her grace and fame;
Yet count that, call her what you please,
What spells romance best spells her name.

Romance? Aye, realized romance:
Fulfilments of hope's prophecies:
Ideals, thro' the clairvoyance
Of one seer, made realities---
That is the story of our land.
Pray Heaven that, where great Serra led,
We may not fear to follow, and
Tread where his footprints bid us tread.



Out West.

"Out West" they say. All right; but out of what?
Out of what's called "High Life?" Way out beyon
The gay world's pomps and pleasures and what not:
The Vanity Fair of fashion: the beau monde?

Well, yes; we are outsiders, more or less,
Thus far; with us Dame Fashion's not a-top;
That doesn't trouble us a lot, I guess;
We'd sooner have a cow-boy than a fop.

But, all the same, in these far distant parts
We're fairly civilized upon the whole;
We have our share, I think, of honest hearts---
Of souls who look past dollars for their goal.

We're not illiterates; if folk are short
Of books, that want is even now supplied.
The Arts and Sciences hold constant Court
Among us, and are honoured far and wide.

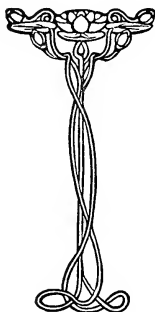
The feast of reason and the flow of soul"
Enter our social feasts, and give them zest;
Our sympathies reach out from pole to pole;
We're not parochial sectaries "Out West."

We've windbags, grafters, grubbers; yes, a few;
More than we know perhaps; more than we want;
But look the wide world over, and, if you
Can tell us where there aren't such souls, we can't.

And as for climate, as for fruits and flowers---
Well, of these things we're not inclined to boast;
But when the States "Back East" can better ours,
Then we'll make tracks for the Atlantic coast.

Meantime we've lots to think of and to do;
Our work's cut out for us from day to day;
We have our play times, and we use them too;
In short we're here, and here we mean to stay.

Eulalia.



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1914

Eulalia.

"Sweet-heart" they call her, when we meet
Our men-friends sauntering down the street;
"We" means Eulalia and myself;
I'm an old fellow; she's an elf.

Refrain.

"Sweet-heart," "Sweetheart," they gaily cry,
And then they smile and wave good-bye;
That's now; but, I guess, some day
'Twill be---not a smile and a waved good-bye,
But---"Sweet-heart, love me or I die;"
For that's what they mostly say.

It doesn't move her much as yet---
That word "Sweetheart;" her thoughts are set
On other matters, such as toys,
And dolls that mimic baby-boys.
Refrain.

She's two years old, and so, you see,
Has no care yet for galantries,
No use for a lover's vows; and yet
She's a bit, I reckon, of a coquette.
Refrain.

Natheless she keeps a special place
In her heart of hearts, and a special grace,
For daddy, and mummy, and grandmamma,
Aye, and for me---her grandpapa.
Refrain.

William Hathorn Mills.



VERSES

BY

W. H. MILLS



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The Golden West.

The isle that to Montalvo seemed
Half faery, half Elysian,
What time he wrote, and writing dreamed,
Las Sergas de Esplandian---

This, less all freaks of phantasy,
Less fables born to die away,
A dream-land made reality,
Our California is to-day.

All sorts of fruits it freely bears
In groves, thick-laden as Christmas trees---
Oranges, lemons, apples, pears,
Apricots, peaches,---what you please.

Elsewhere it is as a garden-field
Of flowers, asparagus, beet, tomatoes;
Its very deserts, watered, yield
Alfalfa, melons, dates, potatoes.

"A land of corn and wine and oil"---
That is what Canaan was of old;
All this our Californian soil
Is; you may add its herds and gold.

For it's also a land of ranches, where
Cattle and horses are bred and fed;
It's also a land, where miners tear
The golden ore from its native bed.

But its best possession, its best asset,
Is the gold that ripens the fruits it bears---
The sunshine-gold, which all may get,
For it's lavished on all in equal shares.

There are those who call it "the Land of Heart's
Desire"---a present Utopia;
Those, who have studied the ancient arts,
Might call it a Cornucopia.

Others have named it "the Golden Land"---
An El Dorado realized;
But its minerals bring less gold to hand
Than the fields its rivers have fertilized.

Call it whatever you will, it is
The pick of the earth—a paradise,
With certain eccentricities,
Of fruitful fields and smiling skies.

It isn't perfect; that's confest;
Eden itself with a snake was curst;
But, spite of rattlers, and of that pest,
Culex, of all lands it's the first.



A Great Franciscan.

Fray Junipero Serra, we,
Pondering your life-history,
Bare our heads to your memory.

Truly yours was a beautiful soul;
Truly yours was a lofty goal;
Truly your life was a perfect whole.

As a valiant soldier of Christ, you bore
The brunt of the battle that won this shore,
And we hail you its true Conquistador.

Si monumentum quaeritis,
Strangers, who visit this land, it is
All round about you and it's just this:—

A land from heathen savageries
Redeemed by uplifting enterprise,
And made a fruitful paradise.

It's all an issue of what he wrought:
A realization of what he sought:
A fruit of the lessons he lived and taught.

For he was the first evangelist
Who brought to this land the Name of Christ—
Aye, and its first agriculturist.

He taught the natives the arts of peace;
He made their abominations cease;
He changed their deserts to tilths and leas.

Weary often he must have been
In body—aye, and in soul, I ween,
But his heart was great, and his faith serene.

And so the dreams of his youth came true;
For the Indians loved him—believed him too,
And did whatever he bade them do.

Won by his influence they became
Christians—disciples, whose lifelong aim
Was to live lives worthy of their new name.

And the mission stations he founded here,
Tho' ruined now, are a witness clear
Of his work, and make his memory dear.

Aye, and of sacrilege they indict
Those who afterwards did despite
To his order, as reckoning Might was Right.

Fray Junipero, loyal son
Of the Faith, I think, when your race was run,
You heard your Master's—"Well done: Well done."



San Bernardino.

About us tower, a vision grand!

San Bernardino's peak and range;
Like giant walls they seem to stand
Changeless, yet monuments of change.

'Twas in the tertiary age,
When seismic forces shook the earth,
And stamped their record on this page
Of Nature's book, that they took birth.

Eras have passed since then; yet still
Earth-tremors now and again may shake
Their calm, as when they felt the thrill
Of San Francisco's awful quake.

It thrilled them—yes, but in no wise
Disturbed their steadfast constancy;
It thrilled them—yes, but still they rise
Unmoved, in their solemn majesty.

Snow-crowned, magnificent, serene,
They seem to meet and pierce the skies—
A sheltering rampart, and a screen
From the chill North's discourtesies.

It's thanks to them that the valley teems
With flowers and fruits, with corn and oil;
For the waters, caught from their springs and streams,
Make runnels to irrigate the soil.

What's in a name? Well, names there are,
The sound of which, as a trumpet-call,
Summons to fight for the right, and dare
All for its sake, tho' the heavens fall.

Aye, dare whatever a man may do,
Or bear—as erst the Apostle Paul,
de Xavier, Damien, dared, what tho'
To do what they did was to lose their all:

All, that is, that the world counts good—
Its ease, its pleasures, its luxuries;
All that our natural tempers would
Choose as a heritage and prize.

That was the way of the friars, who came
Hither a hundred years ago;
That was the way of the Saint, whose name
They set on the hills, and the vale below.

It's just the way of the Cross—the way
Of self-denial for others' sake—
The way, whatever the world may say,
All of us always are called to take.

So we dwell in the midst of memories,
As well as amid fair scenes of beauty—
Memories calling to high emprise,
And steadfast effort to do our duty.

San Bernardino, here's to your health;
Here's to your growth, and prosperity;
And we wish you, what is the truest wealth,
Courage and faith in your destiny.

San Buenaventura.

Ventura, they who lately clipt
Your name, and "San Buena" skipt,
Into a blunder surely slipt.

What's in a name? There's this—a claim
That they, who bear a noble name,
Should live lives worthy of its fame.

San Bernardino clipt, it's true,
Saves breath, but then it loses too
All inspiration as Berdoo.

Fortune may be or good or ill,
And, seeming good, may but fulfil
The mockeries of an evil will.

Success may be too dearly bought,
And fortune's gifts, if wrongly sought,
And wrongly won, are things of naught.

So "San Buena" seems to say,
Seek fortune in a righteous way,
As in Junipero's earthly day:

Who gave this place in days of yore
The name a Christian saint once bore,
To christen it for evermore.

Therefore, Venturans, don't forget
The prefix which of old was set
Before your name, and should be yet.

Let memories of your ancient name
Move you to make your every aim
Such as Junipero would acclaim.

Your Mission Churches stand to teach
What faith and duty mean, and preach
Christ unto all within their reach.

Long may they serve their ministry;
Long may the Cross, which stands on high,
Lesson you how to live and die.

A beacon for the ships at sea,
A beacon may it also be
Signalling souls—"Come unto ME."

Fair are your mountains, fair your sea;
Your fruits and flowers are fair to see;
Aye, all is fair as fair can be.

Let these reflections of God's grace
Move you to run your earthly race
As souls who long to see His Face.



Los Angeles.

Los Angeles, the angels' town!
What if an angel-host came down
 To visit their own city?
What would their thoughts be? Thoughts of glad
Emotion, or reflections sad
 Of sorrow and of pity?

Some things they surely would approve
As tokens of unselfish love
 At work for human weal—
Your hospitals, your libraries,
Museum, parks, academies,
 Your Churches' holy zeal.

But are there not, your bounds within,
Abodes of vice, foul haunts of sin,
 Which shame your high estate?
Are there not crimes and infamies
Practised by brutes in human guise—
 Things such as angels hate?

O Angelenos, let your aim
Be to live worthy of the name—
The holy name—you bear;
So shall the angels help and guide
And keep you, whatsoe'er betide,
For ever in their care.



Camping Out.

After the ducks in Mexico—

The ducks that eat the corn that's sown
For men and beasts and fowls—we go
Hither and thither, up and down.

Where irrigated fields lie damp,

By swamps and pools and slues galore,
Along the broad lagoon, we tramp,
And shoot at them with number four.

Sometimes we miss them, sometimes fail

To find them on our morning beat;
When this is so, there are the quail—
And quail are excellent to eat.

Some of us, now the moon is bright,

Where on the fields shed corn lies thick,
Have hunted feeding ducks by night;
And this has often done the trick.

One day we clomb volcanic slopes,
To where the Colorado's flood
Has made irruption, with high hopes—
Hopes that were all nipped in the bud.

For other folks had pitched their camp
Before us, 'neath the crater's scaur—
Some inconsiderate and pamp-
ered souls, who owned a motor-car.

Their empty bottles, cast away,
Showed they had feasted; and, worse luck!
Their empty shells were proofs that they
Had killed or scattered all the duck.

One solitary diver died
Before one hunter's gun; it cost
Six shots to kill it; nought beside
Came to our bag; 'twas labour lost.

* * * * *

They've gone---those energetic souls,
Who camped with us in our first kraal;
And, since that shack upon the whole's
Dismal, I've moved to an old corral.

And here with Uncle Hick O'Neal,
As guide and cook and comrade too,
I live a gypsy life, and feel
Fit as a flea, or kangaroo.

The days are hot; the nights are cold;
The contrasts, I'll allow, aren't nice;
We're scorched at noon; our buckets hold
Each morn an inch of solid ice.

Yet, couched at night beneath a pile
Of rugs, I'm warm, to my surprise;
And oh! the sunshine's like a smile
Against the frown of English skies.

All winter through, in this fair clime,
You can camp out, and have no fear;
For it isn't till spring, or summer, time
That snakes, mosquitoes, rains appear.

We never worry, never haste
To catch a train here; by the way,
One only train runs through this waste,
And it runs only once a day.

A waggon drawn by two old mules,
Takes us about; they never trot;
To bustle themselves would break their rules,
I take it, and it's far too hot.

We live from hand to mouth, 'tis true;
Yet for our needs we have enough;
Birds, bacon, coffee—Mezcal too—
With cheese and cakes, are quantum suff.

As for Mezcal, it has, ywis,
A tang of its own, likewise a smell;
Yet, after all, there's a certain bliss
In drinking essence of asphodel.

For amaranth and asphodel
Are, as the poets sing, the flowers
Which deck the Elysian fields, where dwell
The blest, and beautify their bowers.

It's all a poets' tale, you say;
Maybe; and yet there's a sort of spell
In the thought, which helps to chase away
One's first distrust of that tang and smell.

It's fifty cents a bottle; there
Is a better sort, but for this you give—
That is, if you're a millionaire—
One dollar, or one twenty-five.

We couldn't run to that fearsome price;
Moreover—this augments its merit
For vagabonds—Mezcal goes twice
As far as the more expensive spirit.

Visitors come to us, now and then—
Motorists from Calxico,
Mexicans, Indians, Chinamen,
Britishers—passers who come and go.

We feed the hungry; their appetites
Are often big; give thirsty peds
Drinks; for the Chinese Uncle writes
Letters, and finds them sacks for beds.

And so we potter along; at times
We shoot, bring logs in, do our chores;
At times I write these doggrel rhymes,
While 'neath a mezquite Uncle snores.

That's how at present we're taking rest;
That's how we're making holiday;
You can't well beat it; it's quite the best
Medicine I know. Here ends this lay.



Camp-Followers.

Road-runners three our camp frequent,
And eat up all our odds and ends;
They look on us, I guess, as sent
By Providence to be their friends.

Fragments of bread and cheese and fruit:
What we don't want of quail and duck:
Such things as these all seem to suit
Their taste; they take them as pot-luck.

One visitor we had complained
He'd left one night at his tent-door
A dozen eggs; next morn remained
Twelve empty egg-shells—nothing more.

Road-runners had surveyed the show;
Had found his eggs, and sucked the lot;
This aggravated him, and so
He finished their career with shot.

He'd not forgiven them; as for me,
Who have no new-laid eggs at stake,
Birds that eat rattlesnakes are free
To take whatever they can take.

They're having carousals now around
The chair whereon I sit and smoke;
One's not two yards away; he's found
I'm not an inimical bloke.

He lifts and lowers his nodding crest;
His tail wags ceaselessly; I think
He's really doing his very best
To perpetrate a friendly wink.

Ah! in a moment he has gone;
He has a feud, which nought can staunch,
With passing motor-cars, and one
Is hurrying up toward the ranch.

An Imp.

The little chipmunk
Is full of spunk,
And it takes a lot to skeer him;
Yet he's also wary,
And somewhat chary
Of letting you get too near him.

But, all the same,
He soon gets tame,
Especially if you feed him;
He'll sit on your foot,
As on a tree-root,
Or stump, if you don't stampede him.

It isn't funk
When he makes a bunk,
But he takes no needless chances;
He's pert and spry,
Or still and shy,
According to circumstances.

He burrows a hole—
This wily soul—
In the ground, and there takes shelter;
Or, if need be,
Streaks up a tree
With his family, helter-skelter.

He sits on his heels
To take his meals,
And his jaws go snicker-snicker,
With the energy
And velocity
Of a Waterbury ticker.

Locusts he'll eat,
But he's mighty sweet
On corn, new-sown or reapit;
And he'll loot your larder,
If you've no warder,
In the shape of a cat, to keep it.

He munches apples;
With nuts he grapples;
Likes carrots and beans and berries;
His appetite
Is cosmopolite,
But he's extra fond of cherries.

His cheeks bulge out
Till they're just about
As tight as he well can pack 'em;
Then off to his holt
He makes a bolt,
To digest his supplies, or stack 'em.

An inch away
From his hole one day
I laid a rind of bacon;
He sat on a chunk
Of wood, and wunk
At me, if I'm not mistaken.

As soon as I'd gone
To my chair, he was on
The spot, to inspect this treasure;
He nibbled a bit,
And it seemed to fit;
So he finished it at his leisure.

Would fish food vary
His dietary—
I wondered, and thought I'd try it;
The head of a trout
Resolved my doubt,
For he passed disdainful by it.

For stale refuse
He has no use—
This clean-souled little rodent;
Where a rat would thrive
He couldn't live,
And, for that matter, wouldn't.

You may call him names
Such as fancy frames
For imps; you may dub him rascal;
But, whatsoever
You call him, never
Can you this imp an ass call.

For he's slick and cute
Past all dispute,
And he needs no inciting wallops;
For he's never slow,
But is on the go
All day, and he mostly gallops.

Curled up in his keep,
He spends in sleep
The winter; but when spring's beauties
Peep forth, he awakes,
And promptly takes
Up again his round of duties.

The little chipmunk
Is never punk:
Never a feckless slacker;
He works for his food,
Aye, and makes good,
As nut-storer, and nut-cracker.



Moon-Lighting in Mexico.

The moon is full; the ducks are thick
Upon the irrigated lands;
He that would get them must be slick,
And grasp his chance with both his hands.

He must be at them all the night;
His downy pillow he must scorn;
Must shoot them by the pale moonlight;
Must follow them up from eve to morn.

This is no weakling's work; you'd best
Be young; you must be hale and strong;
For irrigated fields are just
Swamps for the time—swamps broad and long.

It's tramping up, and tramping down,
In companies of three or four;
It's firing right into the brown,
And chasing cripples by the score.

That is the game; by it you get
A lot of ducks—at least you may;
Not a bad proposition; yet
For me—bed, single birds, and day.



Dogged.

A most unscrupulous little sinner,
Bearing a soft romantic name,
Sheila, with naught of softness in her—
Into our home and hearts she came.

Of bluest aristocratic blood,
Bred of the stock they breed in Skye,
Long-haired, short-legged, sharp-nosed, she stood
Somewhere about six inches high.

Thoroughly spoilt, she had a hot
Temper, and any amount of pride;
Her tastes were dainty; she claimed and got
The best of all that the house supplied.

She liked her comforts at night; she slept
On her master's bed; I think one eye
Was always open; thus she kept
Watch over him and the family.

Once, thought to be delicate, she was clad
In a jacket; she had no use for it;
Tho' little more than a toy, she had
A bulldog's pluck, and a bulldog's grit.

She'd a sense of sport in her soul all right,
But limited in its range and scope;
She had no sympathy of delight
With the spaniel's joy, or the setter's hope.

In a sort of half-hearted way she'd run
After rabbits; at times she would chivy cats;
But, if you wanted to see some fun,
You had only to mention the one word—"Rats."

One day we missed her; she didn't come
To dinner—a most unwonted thing;
She had followed the old rat-catcher home,
We thought, to return when she'd had her fling.

She never came back again; we sought,
But sought her vainly, everywhere,
Till, all of a sudden, occurred a thought
Of the moat—had somebody drowned her there—

Some tramp she'd bitten? She was, we knew,
A trifle free with her teeth, if vext;
So we drained the moat, and then the true
Story came out—comment and text.

For three feet down we found her dead,
Gripping a dead rat, thigh and shank—
A rat whose shoulders, fore paws and head
Were wedged in a hole in the root-bound bank.

She had chased the rat, when it made a bolt,
To the moat's steep brink, to the depths below;
She had caught it just as it gained its holt,
And died with it rather than let it go.



Vnitas Vnitatum Omnia Vnitas.

She will not fall thro' the assault,
As the first cause, of foreign foes—
Old England; if she falls, God knows
Her own, not theirs, will be the fault:

Her own, because that word of power,
“Union is strength,” is lost upon her;
And, deaf to calls and claims of honour,
She dreams, tho' this is an evil hour.

What of her colonies—the young
Nations who flocked to their mother's side
In her time of need, and fought and died
For her, when her fate in the balance hung?

How can they help, however leal,
A land which suffers those to sway
Her will, who fritter and fool away,
By breaking union, her strength and weal?

England, awake! Awake to do
The work that is yours; have done with lies;
Have done with demagogues' sophistries;
And be to yourself and your children true.

Gather them all, as your family,
To share your counsels, to take their part
In your world-matters; that so one heart,
One spirit, may make you a Unity.

Five nations reckon you Mother-State;
Give them a place in your Parliament;
Seek their, as well as your own, content;
And you shall be greatest among the great:

Great with the power that makes to cease
All evil, that brings all good to birth;
Great, as the salt of all the earth—
Its salt of purity and of peace.

Pax Parata.

"Forewarned, forearmed," they say; but what
If warnings fall on heedless ears---
Ears deafened by a noisy lot
Of fools, who dub precautions "fears."

Who mock at "fears," that they may preach
License as glorious liberty---
Freedom from every bond---and teach
Rank irresponsibility?

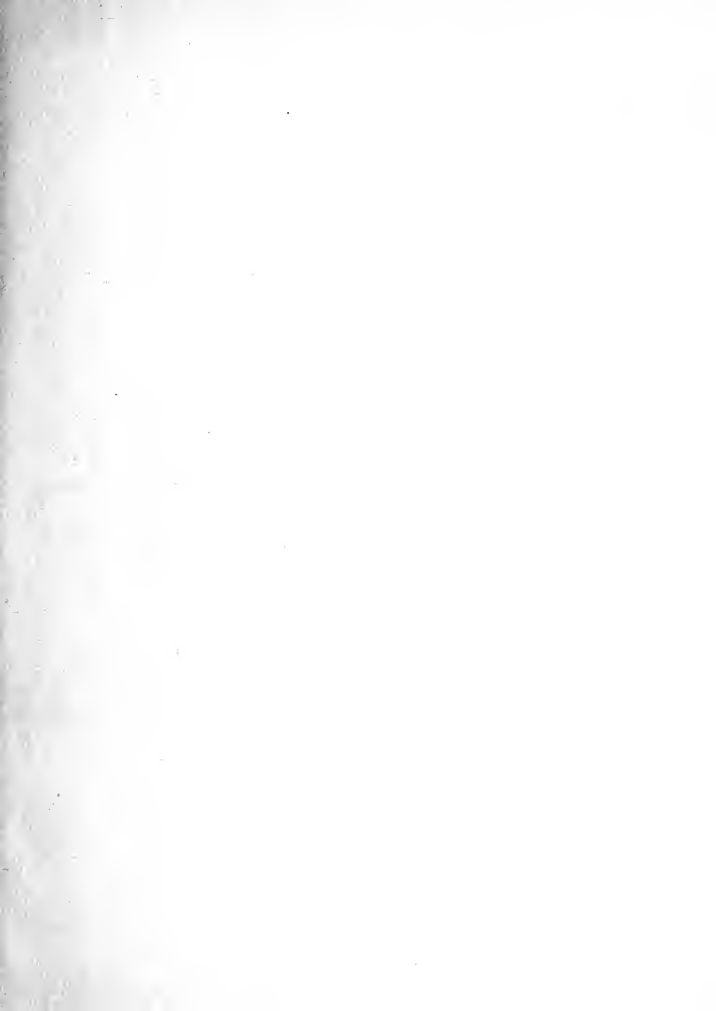
Imperial interests, the claims
Of colonies, the common weal---
Such words to them are empty names:
Appeals they simply cannot feel.

As for defence against attack
By foreign foes---why, that would mean
Class knit to class; and they would lack
A job---a terrible thing, I ween.

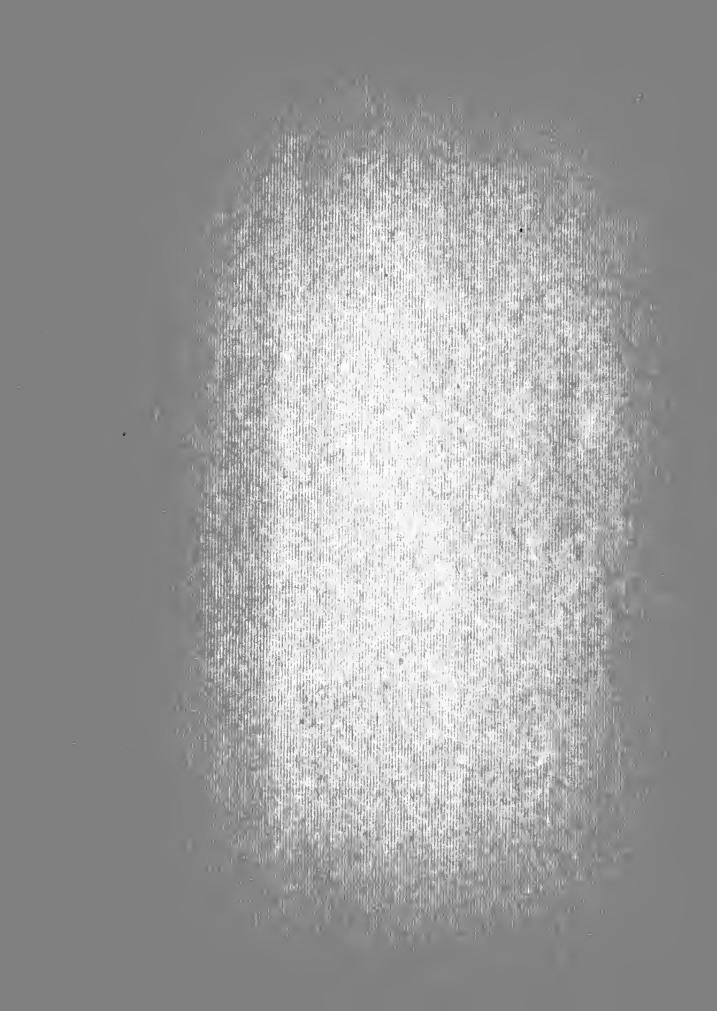
So, as false prophets cried of yore,
They cry, "Peace, Peace," and "All is well,"
Tho' muttering sounds, foreboding war,
Are rife, as 'ere Jerusalem fell.

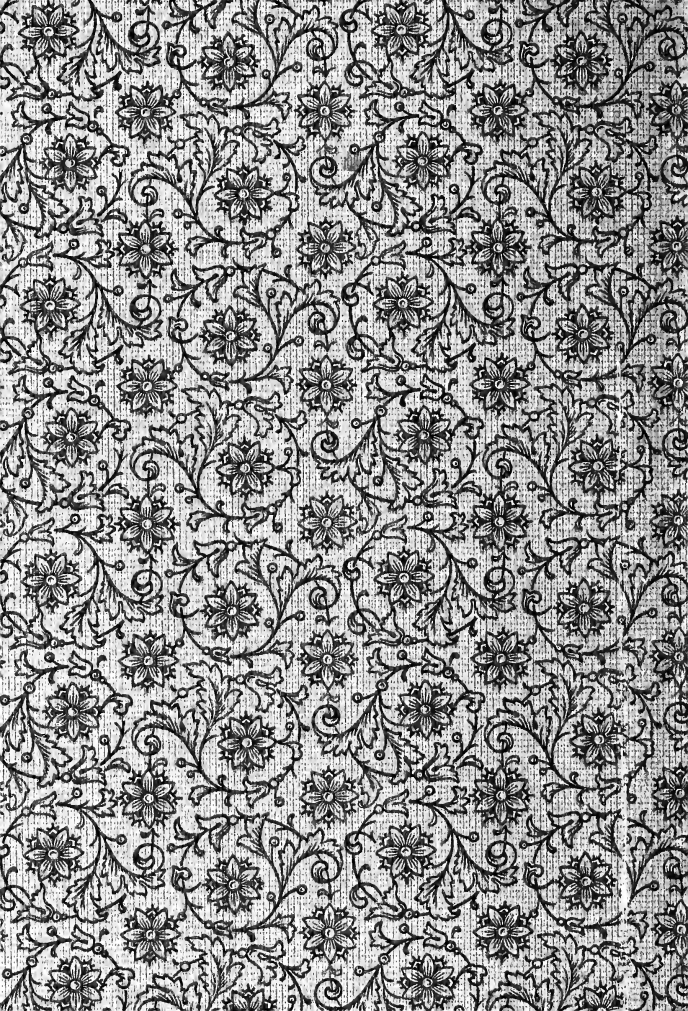
O land, whatever land thou art,
Prick all thy wind-bags; stop their bray;
And lay this saving truth to heart---
Pacem si vis, bellum para.

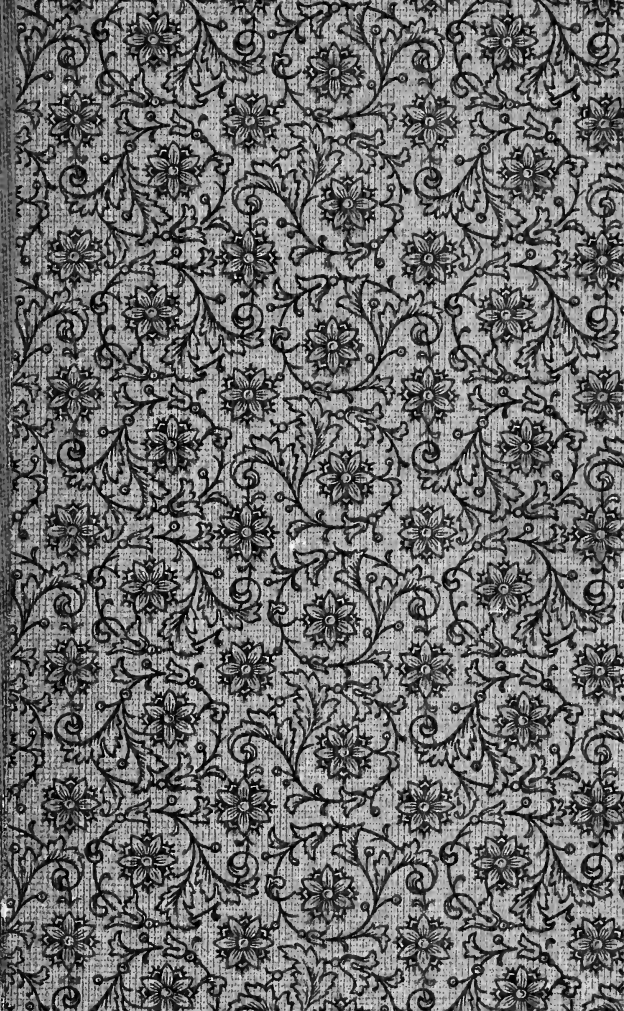












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